Vol. 3 of

From Rev. Samuel Hunt, who wrote "Henry Wilson's Rise & Fall of the Slave Power" – in reply to W.L.G.'s strictures thereon.

Natick Jan 15 '77.

W. L. Garrison Esq.

Dear Sir

Yours of the 26th ult was duly received, and read, as you may well suppose, with more interest than gratification. From your article on Strictures on the chapter on "Churches &c, I submitted for your inspection, I am led to the conclusion that you regard its treatment of those who acted with you in the struggle, as not unfair, as conveying an erroneous impression, a disparaging thought &c. You write also, that we "have made the most of the exceptional cases and perhaps left the impression that they constituted a considerable por-

V39, P6(a)

tion of the whole, whereas the apostasy was well nigh universal, &c"

Of course such a criticism is rather damaging to the reputation of candor and fair dealing we had been aiming for, and congratulating ourselves somewhat on its attainment. Of course, Mr. Wilson and myself had an remembered grief of some of the hard things you had felt constrained to say of churches and parties, and yet we both so thoroughly sympathized with you in your grand purpose, and so thoroughly admired your heroism throughout the mental struggle, that nothing but a firm conviction of historic truth would ever have permitted any statement which even in the most remote manner would have been construed into a reflection. As to "disparaging tenets", we simply

quoted from Dr. Goodell the proportion he deemed correct; while of the proportion of Christian churches and ministers who might be fairly called antislavery, we were intended, as we never believed that they constituted "a considerable portion." Indeed, I myself have been often sorely chided ~~in this way~~ for my unchanteableness in this regard.

And yet I was always an antislavery minister, and the two churches, Natick and Franklin, of which I was pastor for twenty six years, were especially the latter almost unanimously ~~an~~ antislavery in their convictions. It seems to me that you must have read the chapter a little hastily to have reached just the conclusion you did. Thus you criticise the expression, "antislavery was the child of Christian faith, &c." and ask; "Why

any more so than of the Jewish faith." So more of Jewish reasoning to the dispensations as parts of our Constitution that in a certain sense, sentence was written, in the interests of Garrisonian abolitionism, and in condemnation of the Churches, because of that you always said, that, instead of antagonizing the Church and the ministry you were looking to them and depending on them for your most generous and persistent support; and in the chapter, as I had always contended during my ministry, that the thought was Christians and Churches had them selves to thank for what they were prone to stigmatize as Garrisonian infidelity. Of course, I took back upon your part the long and terrible struggle

which I cannot think of now without a shudder - and would prefer death to another such - with somewhat different feelings, for I felt myself set in the defence of both abolition and the Christian Church, and a blow that fell on either hurt me. It involved in your estimation, as you express it, "dishonorable inconsistency." Perhaps so. If so it made it all the harder for me, as an honest and sensible man, to maintain a position involving such "inconsistency". But, hmmm, that may have been in the past, nothing was farther from Dr Wilson's mind, I presume, and my own, I am sure, than to do injustice to the heroic pioneer of the movement against American Slavery.

V39, P6 (a)

And now, my respected friend and fellow traveler in abolitionism, what does your horoscope of the future reveal to you? I look forward to the coming years, not to say coming months and days, & see little that is re-assuring. I cannot detect the factors in the unsettled or insolved problem before us, that give promise of a favorable solution. What is there in the South ern States to make Republicanism of? I see no element there, white or black, to beget much hope or courage for the future coming before us

Very respectfully yours

Samuel Hoar